

THE HAHALIS WELFARE SOCIETY OF BUKA:
A MELANESIAN NATIVISTIC MOVEMENT

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The Hahalis Welfare Society of Buka: A Melanesian Nativistic Movement

Introduction

A New Guinea villager summarized a century of life under foreign domination in the following manner:

God sent the Germans to New Guinea and told them to help us. They were before my time but my father told me about them. Because they were bad and wicked God told the Australians to send them away. The Australians were not much better. They did not return our lands and they were sometimes cruel and beat us. God decided to punish the Australians and told the Japanese to come here. The Japanese were cruel and treated us badly and God decided to give the Australians another chance by sending the Americans, their clansmen, to help them beat the Japanese. After the war the Australians were much better and said they would help us and give us roads, hospitals, schools and things to grow. They have only done a little of this and now the Americans are coming here again to see whether the Australians are doing what they promised. (Hastings, 1969:112)

This statement reflects the vicissitudes of foreign contact and government which New Guineans have had to endure, and which have provoked a wide range of political, economic and social changes in Melanesia. One broad category of indigenous responses to these factors of change has been variously referred to as cargo cults, millenarian movements and revitalization movements (Wallace). The Hahalis Welfare Society, the subject of this study, is one such movement whose emergence can be regarded as a nativistic reaction to a world of changing social and economic conditions. The Hahalis Society, as will be shown, attempted to come to terms with these new conditions

in part in ways similar to other nativistic movements in Melanesia, including cargo cultism, but also in part in ways completely unique to the general Melanesian experience.

Part I will set the stage for this study by briefly retracing the history of European contact with Buka and the neighboring island of Bougainville, especially the effect of religious mission activities, and by reviewing the history of Cargoism in Buka up to the end of World War II. Part II deals with the history of the Hahalis Welfare Society and the events which led to the clash with the Australian territorial administration in 1962, and the results of that confrontation. Part III is this observer's attempt to analyze and interpret the Hahalis Welfare Society in terms of the theories which have been propounded to explain nativistic movements, their causes and manifestations.

I have selected the Hahalis Welfare Society for study for several reasons: as a fairly recent phenomenon it reflects the concerns and sentiments of an indigenous people who have decided to make their own decisions regarding their social and economic welfare, rather than to be dependent upon government administration; the movement has been localised in the Buka area, which affords a well-defined boundary for this study; and despite the unique nature of its history and development,

little has been published on it from an interpretative standpoint. Fortunately, source material is available from a number of first hand observers, including accounts by some of the Hahalis principals themselves.

Part I - Setting the Stage- European contact- mission activities - Cargoism in Buka

The islands of Buka and Bougainville are geographically the most northerly of the Solomon Islands archipelago, but are politically part of New Guinea. Buka is just to the north of Bougainville and is separated from the larger island by a narrow strait, the Buka Passage. Buka is roughly 10 by 30 statute miles across, oriented north to south, and is hilly and of volcanic rock in the southwest graduating to a level, undulating interior, to a raised coral platform in the north and east.

The Bukan population in the early 1970's numbered approximately 11,000. They and the Bougainvillians are distinguishable from other Papua New Guineans by their extreme black skin color, which in a way has served to unite them against their lighter-skinned countrymen.

The French explorer Bougainville gave Buka its present name when his expedition in 1768 was met by cries of 'bouca, bouca' (what? what?) by the natives who rowed out to his ships. The Europeans who followed visited Bougainville and Buka in increasing numbers, and were principally whalers in search of provisions and crew, traders who came for coconuts and copra, labor recruiters, and other explorers (Oliver, 1973:20).

The German Richard Parkinson, writing in 1907,

recorded the indigenous reaction to the mixed bag of foreigners reaching their shores, and explained why they developed a notorious reputation for hostility against whites:

"Murders of white men were recorded every year, murders that were brought about by the victim's own fault, or, as was unfortunately the case, done to avenge the misdeeds of other recruiters. Every white person was regarded as an enemy, recruiter, trader or missionary; the crime of another has often caused the death of a perfectly harmless and peaceful man."
(Oliver, 1973:33)

The seeds of racial hostility implanted during this first period of contact were nurtured in the following years by the exploitive nature of foreign interests in Bougainville and Buka. Under German hegemony in the 1880's, then later under Australian colonial rule, the story of their colonization is no different from that of the rest of Melanesia. Furthermore, their isolation from the center of colonial administration in Rabaul and later in Port Moresby contributed to what many Bougainvillians and Bukans regarded as administrative indifference and neglect concerning their welfare.

German aims in New Guinea during the period 1884 to 1914 consisted principally of developing the islands' economy through the establishment of copra plantations. Native lands were alienated and European planters took over the most fertile areas for planting. To keep their own costs of administering the territory to a minimum

and to force the natives to participate more fully in the money economy the Germans instituted an annual head tax. Those unable to pay were required to contribute labor to public service projects, such as road building, for a certain number of days per year. The continuation of the head tax system by the Australians was to be one of the causes of the confrontation between the administration and Hahalis villagers years later, as we shall see.

Since the German administration was reluctant to spend more than nominal amounts for government services in the territory, the introduction of religious missions was viewed as a welcome source of funds for meeting native welfare needs. Catholic Marists had opened a mission in the Solomons in 1902. Several years later they expanded northward to Bougainville and Buka, which became their exclusive domain until Methodist missionaries moved into the area from the Solomons following the end of World War I. The missions, both Catholic and Methodist, became the main agents of social change in the two islands, filling the void left by the government. Mission schools widely outnumbered government schools, and any government welfare programs that did exist were heavily supplemented by mission programs.

The missions' main purpose, was, of course, proselytization, and most of the schooling they offered was directed toward religious study. The Catholics dominated, with over 65 missionaries at twenty-one mission stations (1939 figures), compared to six Methodist and two Seventh Day Adventist missionaries in the two islands (Oliver, 1973:111). The emphasis was on educating the young, who could then return to their villages to spread the "lotu" and to relate what they had seen and learned at the mission schools.

Why did so many convert to Christianity? Oliver offers a number of salient reasons - first, Christian doctrine was accommodated without difficulty into the indigenous cosmology and lifestyle; second, some of the early conversions were by purchase by payment of goods or money to relatives; third, the missions were generous in handing out European trade goods - tobacco, cloth, tools - and thus made ready converts; fourth, medical aid as practiced by the missionaries had a widespread effect in attracting converts, partly due to the curative "magic" of western medicine; fifth, schooling and education was believed to be the key to the European's superiority in acquiring goods and knowledge, and many flocked to the mission schools to learn the secrets of the Europeans; sixth, the missionaries often acted as a buffer against

other Europeans and the administration; seventh, traditional community feuds carried over into the Catholic/Protestant rivalry, and one group would join the Catholics en masse if their enemies became Methodists, and vice versa; eighth, there was widespread belief in the coming millenium, and Christian doctrine reinforced such views; and finally, Christianity was identified with "being European" - no distinctions were made between European ways and customs, and Melanesians who aspired to becoming like Europeans believed conversion to Christianity was a necessary adjunct (Oliver, 1973:114-117). One or more of these reasons served to attract villagers to the missions. According to Oliver, "By World War II nearly all Bougainvillians had become at least "adherents" to Christianity, of one European variety or another, and some had even begun to develop new varieties of Christianity of their own" (1973:111).

The missionaries and islanders had divergent objectives in their relationship - the islander viewed Christianity and association with Europeans as the means toward learning their secrets. Indigenous hopes and desires were wrapped up in expectations of capitalizing on their relationships with missionaries and other Europeans - but their frustration was inevitable.

Bukan Cargo Cults

From this wellspring of discontent came a readiness to follow new directions. At the same time a process of selective adoption of elements of the Christian doctrine was underway, resulting in a synthesis with some indigenous beliefs. The first of several millenarian movements appeared on the island.

In 1913 a Lontis villager named Muling claimed to know the secret to acquiring European goods by magic. Muling and another leader, Novite, were arrested by the German administration and sent to Morobe, where Novite died. Muling was later released and returned to Lontis (Worsley, 1968:114).

Another outbreak of millenarianism emerged in 1932 in the Bukan villages of Malasang and Gogohei. Its leadership consisted of Pako, a villager who had travelled abroad and adopted some European ways, Muling, the leader of the 1913 Lontis movement, and Terasin, a Marist catechist. Pako called for the renunciation of paganism and Christianity, and advocated ancestor worship. According to Worsley's account, inlaw taboos were abolished; men's initiation ceremonies were revealed to the women, magic was renounced and individual property in money abolished. This last practice did not imply merely a revulsion against things European; it emphasized rather the

solidarity and primitive communism of the movement (Worsley, 1968:115). The movement flourished - Pako soon had united all of Buka under his red and black flags, and wharves, docks and storehouses were built in preparation for the coming Cargo. The Australian administration's reaction was to arrest the three leaders, who were exiled to Madang; Pako died there and Muling and Terasim were allowed to return to Buka (Worsley, 116).

After a year or two had passed, Sanop, a former government interpreter and the leader of Gogohei village began prophesying the coming of a Cargo ship. This movement was limited to the Gogohei area, where the villagers built storehouses for the Cargo on the beach, prepared for a "coming darkness" by purchasing lamps and kerosene, and abstained from work while waiting for the ship to arrive. Sanop was eventually arrested and jailed for six months (Worsley, 116).

The Australian administration's attitude toward these movements is seen in the following extract from its report to the League of Nations in 1933-34:

From time to time, parts of the Territory are disturbed by small outbreaks of a quasi-religious nature, which, as a rule, create a certain amount of local agitation, and then quickly subside.

Early in the history of such movements, the prophets are usually able to gather a following which includes idlers and mischief-makers, watching eagerly for an opportunity to fleece credulous victims. As most native

peoples in New Guinea are easily swayed by anything suggesting the supernatural, they can be bent to the will of the organizers, and in such a condition would become a positive menace both to the community and the Administration if such movements got out of hand.

Usually the prophets become dazzled by their power, and do something foolish before the movements gain much strength, and in this condition either betray their duplicity or greed to the people, or bring themselves within reach of the law. For these reasons, most of the movements have had a relatively short and harmless existence. However, it has been demonstrated more than once that whole communities, differing linguistically and politically, can be bound together and swayed by influences of this kind, which, if directed by sufficiently unscrupulous men, could produce a great deal of damage in a relatively short time. (TNG, 1933-34:22)

Much to the consternation of the Administration Sanop was later to reappear in 1935 as the head of a revival in burial group worship and a belief in Pako's return from the dead. The movement gained a following on Buka and expanded to Bougainville. When the administration learned of the renewed Cargo activity it arrested 100 people on Bougainville, burned down Sanop's headquarters in Buka, and finally arrested Sanop two weeks later. (TNG, 1935-36:21-23)

The Pako and Sanop movements emphasized abandonment of social distinctions, sharing of property and abandonment of accumulated wealth. Anti-white, anti-mission sentiments were also strongly voiced.

The Japanese invasion of New Guinea during World War II was received by the Cargoists with joy. Here at last came the liberators, to punish the whites for not

revealing the secrets to the Cargo. The Japanese also bolstered native pride by showing that non-whites could be equally as powerful. The honeymoon period was a short one, however, and soon the Japanese administration began a system of forced labor, which resulted in reprisals for native non-cooperation. Cult activities continued sporadically, and in 1943 the Japanese arrested three villagers, one a woman from Ielelina, and had them executed for "conspiracy".

Following the war, the return of an Australian administration marked a new period for the Bukens. Many believed that the payment of reparations for war damage heralded a new era of administration interest in Bukan affairs, but once again, new programs were slow in coming.

Part II The Hahalis Welfare Society

John Teosin was born in Hahalis village on Buka in 1938. He began his schooling following the war at a Marist mission school at Hanahan in 1948. An intelligent and receptive student, he was sent the following year by the Marist priests and the Administration to a government school in Buin, on the southern end of Bougainville. This was followed in 1951 by his selection, at age 13, to attend a newly established technical training college near Rabaul on New Britain. Teosin returned to Buka and Hahalis in 1954, to be a mission teacher (Ryan, 1969:287).

According to a Bukan account, one of the elders of Hahalis, Sawa Koratsi, approached the young Teosin prior to his departure for Rabaul and urged him to find the way to the Cargo. "John was only a young man. Unlike many of his age he had great respect for his elders, and a great desire to please them too. He felt shame to see them baffled and frustrated by their inability to find the secret of the Cargo..." "Tomorrow you go to Rabaul, John," the old man said, "there you must find the way, and come back and tell me. Here the white men live on the little island in the Passage (note: Sohano, the district headquarters), they are few, and it is

easy for them to keep the secret, but in Rabaul there are many white men, they cannot all keep it." (Luana, 1969:16)

On his return Teosin related what he had learned in Rabaul to the village elders. According to "Luana's" imaginative account, Teosin told them the following:

I have found the secret of the Cargo, a white teacher at the big high school at Rabaul told me; it comes from the ground, but to get it we must pray to our ancestors and follow their directions. Hear the words of our ancestors, and those to whom they speak; hear the word of the leaders of the people, for they are given power by our ancestors, and hear the wise old Sawa, for he is the great man of Hahalis.

The word spread through the villages, and Bukans deserted the plantations and missions to return to their homes. At sunrise and several times during the day people gathered on the beaches to chant prayers to their ancestors, calling them to rise from their graves and show the way to the Cargo. A large hole was dug in Hahalis preparatory to the arrival of the Cargo, which they expected to appear from the ground. Teosin at age 16 was asked to remain in Hahalis as an advisor to the village elders. Bukans were swept up in a new round of cultism, but this time with far different results.

Two years prior to Teosin's return to Buka, another young Hahalis villager, Francis Hagai, completed his

studies at a Marist mission school in Bougainville where he had been for 2½ years, and returned to Hahalis also to teach. Hagai and Teosin shared a common bond - they had married sisters, who were the daughters of the Ielelina woman executed by the Japanese in 1943 for cultist activities.

According to Hagai, he and Teosin "held a meeting of all our relatives, and suggested that instead of working separately we should all work together. Thirty people were ready to try and we started in a small way. We put all our fowls together, instead of keeping them in ~~a~~ separate runs, and we grew some peanuts, which we sold to the traders. We did not spend this money, but used it to open a small store, which we stocked with bags of rice, cases of tinned meat, shorts, shirts and women's clothes. Before this, those who wanted to buy any of these things had to travel 20 miles. Soon people saw that our idea was a good one, and they joined us. We gradually increased our activities." (Hagai, 1966:12)

Thus the Hahalis Welfare Society was started - or was it? According to one observer, journalist John Ryan, the Hahalis elders asked Teosin to become the leader of the village society which was already in existence, which included the villages of Hahalis, Ielelina and Hanahan (Ryan, 1969:287).

In 1954 the main cash crops of Hahalis were copra and cocoa, which had to be transported over poor roads south to Buka Passage where a Chinese businessman, Wong You, would take over the shipments. No improvements had been made to the roads since the end of the war. The villagers had used their war damage compensation to expand their cash cropping and better transportation was sorely needed. Teosin and Matthias Meksi, who was the first secretary of the society under Teosin, asked the Administration for an agricultural officer and a new road down the center of the island to Buka Passage - with negative results.

Hagai replaced Meksi as secretary in 1959 and immediately pressed for a more activist posture. By 1958 the government had instituted a head tax of £ 2 in order to finance local improvements for areas outside the scope of local government councils. Despite faithful payment of this tax for several years by the people of Hahalis, no improvements had been made on the road.

Pressures were also being placed on the society at this time to join the newly-formed Buka Local Government Council. Playing a major role in this was Anton Kearei from Lonahan village, located halfway between Hahalis and Buka Passage. Kearei, a clan leader, had urged Teosin to instruct villagers to give up the old way of

life and remodel the community along the lines of the white men, to copy the dress, work and leisure habits of the Australians. Kearei was an unofficial government spokesman who had worked as a clerk for the Bougainville education officer, and had travelled to Rabaul and Port Moresby under government sponsorship (PIM, Sept 60:57-63).

Some of Kearei's "New Ideas" were adopted by Teosin, including strict organization of the community into village committees, and rising, washing, working and eating on a set schedule timed by blasts on a tin whistle (Ryan, 1969:288-9).

Kearei was appointed head of the Buka Island Native Local Government Council, which was the Administration's overall program to work out development schemes at the local level. The Local Council covered nearly one half of the Buka people, but Hahalis opted out, preferring to follow its own direction. Rivalry with Kearei (a kin of Teosin's) and disenchantment with anything having to do with the Administration probably pushed Teosin and the Society toward this decision, which was to have major ramifications at a later date. This was repudiation of a plan that the Administration had put major stock in, and deviations from the scheme were not to be countenanced.

Baby Gardens

Major changes took place not only on the economic side of the villagers' lives, but on the social. Communalism and regimentation resulted in new patterns of living and adjustment. The second major factor that raised the Administration's hackles and which threw the missions square against the Society was Teosin's decision to liberalize sex.

Hagai appears to have been behind the move. According to Ryan, he and the younger men demanded that some of the younger Hahalis women be made available to them, even though the girls had been traditionally betrothed to the elders. The young men would normally have to wait years for marriage, and some would have to marry widows of the elders. Teosin was of course already married to the daughter of the Ielelina woman, Elizabeth, and Hagai to Elizabeth's sister, Rose. But this was a popular move on Hagai's part among the younger men, and Teosin was now put on the spot with the village elders, who threatened his removal if he changed the old marriage customs.

Teosin's answer was to revolutionize Hahalis - he decided that all women were to be made available to all men. He would set up a "Baby Garden" wherein the most attractive Hahalis women would live in dormitories

or special houses where they could be visited by the men. The men would be granted visits in return for good work done for the Society, and all of the offspring of these unions would be the children of the Society. There would be no recognized parents and the Society as a group would be responsible for their welfare. Ten of the finest women and ten of the strongest men would begin the experiment immediately, and their children would be the vanguard of a new "master race" on Buka (Ryan, 1969:289-90).

According to one source, the Baby Garden idea was a revival of a pre-missionary Bukan custom. Elders then had first rights of sexual access to the group of young women they had selected for the young men of their following. Sexual orgies also had become a part of the Welfare Society's rites and were aimed at propitiating the ancestors who would reveal the secret of the Cargo. There were displays of public immorality at the first meeting of the Society, and others were held in cemeteries. Men and women disrobed and committed lewd acts in public, and Hahalis reintroduced the public sex act as a gesture of defiance against the missions. Six couples were arrested for performing the act in public, but were acquitted when an anthropologist testified in court that these were symbolic gestures of unity between the Hahalis communities. (Ouellette, 1971:3-4)

The first baby gardens were opened in 1961, and up to three were erected, with up to 200 cubicles. There apparently was no lack of young women to fill them, as adherents to the Society proudly proffered their daughters, or were coerced into doing so. Europeans and visitors were invited to partake of their services, at a price, and the money paid was deposited in the Hahalis Bank. Semi-European structures were built in place of the original two-story bamboo buildings, and were named "Gates of Heaven," "House of Comfort" and "The American Society House." (Ouellette, 1971:4)

Teosin had a ready answer to missionary and government objections to the Baby Garden. He quoted the Bible - Christ had said "Go forth and multiply." Furthermore he compared himself with Joseph - Christ was not his son, but he clothed and fed him, and Teosin claimed that he like Joseph would show charity toward all of the Society's children.

Venereal disease was an early concern, but only limited numbers of cases appeared, possibly due to the general incidence of childhood yaws in the area, which acts to immunize against syphilis in adulthood. The threat of disease, real or otherwise, failed to counteract the widespread acceptance of the Baby Garden among Hahalis villagers and their neighbors.

Land ownership was also the subject of a unique Mahalis experiment. The Society's imprimature over land ownership was not accepted by landowners but Teosin attempted to reconcile matters in the following way: since land was acquired as a birthright, he had each of the village committees select their most influential landholder, the number totaling 80-100 men. Mahalis then selected a woman who had intercourse with all of them, and she soon became pregnant. The child born of this multiple union would have hereditary interest in all of the land and the land problem would have been resolved. Unfortunately the child died soon after birth, and the experiment was discontinued. (Ryan, 1969:311 and Ouellette, 1971:4).

By this time Teosin had strengthened his position as head of the Society, and Hagai was its manager. They had challenged the elders and won on the issue of the Baby Garden. Teosin then proceeded to centralize his authority by creating a police force, a land titles commission to rule over land disputes, magistrates, a Supreme Court consisting of himself and Hagai, a security intelligence network, and a personal bodyguard (Ryan, 1969:290). He became known as "King John" and his wife as "Queen Elizabeth." She had a "Royal Crown" made of cardboard covered with red paper, adorned with raffia of several

colors, with a gold diamond stitched thereon (SP Post, March 16, 1962).

Denouement

The Bougainville District Advisory Council had been warning Port Moresby since 1959 "of the growing cultism and anti-government unrest on Buka." Paul Mason, a coast watcher in World War II and a member of the Council, resigned his position in disgust in 1961 over government interaction. He told the Legislative Council later in Port Moresby "Our advisory council has from time to time tried to make the Administration aware of what was going on but we were told our minutes were unnecessarily long....." (PIM April 1962).

In December 1961 80 Hahalis Society members were in arrears of the head tax. Hagai in a 1962 interview said "Our 1958-59 and '60 taxes were paid with borrowed money. All the men of the villages decided together that they would not pay (the 1961 taxes). They did not have the money having repaid the previous borrowed money" (PIM July 1962).

Three Australian Patrol Officers and ten Native Policemen were sent to Hahalis on December 7, 1961, and went into the village repeatedly to ask for the tax money. "No!" said Teosin. "We have refused to pay this money. Why should we pay? What has the Australian government done for

Hahalis?" (Ryan, 1969:291)

The Administration sent one of their native proteges, Tolai leader Vin Tobaining, to Buka in February 1962 to look at the situation. Tobaining returned with the statement the Administration had been waiting for. "For three years the government has been trying to collect tax from these people - it's time now for the government to stop this native cult business so that it will not spread." (Ryan, 1969:292). This was the mandate the Administration needed for action.

On February 6, 1962, District Officer D.J. Clancy, Police Senior Inspector W.M. Burns and a party of 70 policemen marched into Hahalis to restore law and order and to arrest the leaders of the tax rebellion. Anton Kearei acted as interpreter for the police. Word of the police expedition had reached Hahalis and neighboring villages and 1000 villagers confronted the police force on the outskirts of the village. Burns called for Teosin and the other tax evaders to come forward, and explained to Teosin that he wanted to take him to Sohano, without resorting to force, so that no one would be injured. According to Ryan's account, Teosin agreed to this, but as he, Hagai and Sawa Koratsi were being led away, the Hahalis crowd began to move forward and attack the police with stones and clubs. The assault was led by

200 women holding babies in front of them and it was clear that Hahalis was willing to sacrifice a baby to prove the "brutality" of the police. The police, after a 10 minute battle, beat a strategic retreat, without serious injury on either side, but without the men they had gone to arrest (Ryan 1969:292-3).

News accounts differ to some extent from Ryan's report. According to the South Pacific Post of Feb.9,1962, Teosin had told Kearei at the confrontation "We will never give in nor will we let them take us from our village." "You are the government and I will tell you nothing of what we are doing." "But you can tell your government they can kill us on our land before we will let them take us to Sohano." According to the press account, after this exchange the police rushed in and attempted to grab the Hahalis leaders by the arm. At this time the women holding babies moved forward, followed by the old men and children. The young men did not join the fray.

This first encounter was a galling defeat for the Administration. The police mission had failed and the police could not take the chance of battling women and children, who they knew would be in the vanguard of any future confrontation. Other taxpaying Bukans and Bougainvillians informed missionaries that should the Hahalis villagers succeed over the tax issue, they in

turn would demand the return of their tax money. The situation was an embarrassment to Administrator Cleland's government, and he told the press that there was no question of a police withdrawal. Reinforcements were sent to Euka under the command of Police Superintendent B.J. Holloway. Assistant Administrator John Gunther was disgusted with the Hahalis tactics used against the Burns party..."the only way to meet this cowardly practice of women and babies in the front line is to send even more police. We'll arrest everybody who is so openly flouting the law and who have introduced these disgusting and filthy social practices" (Ryan 1969:294).

The village of Hahalis had been deserted. The people were camped out in caves near Suiana Beach, gathering allies from nearby villages. Holloway's police force of 150 men assembled on February 19, nearly two weeks after the first encounter. They proceeded to Suiana and found the villagers waiting for them - "1000 black, bearded men drawn up in an almost perfect square, the men in the front rank with their arms folded across their chests. They glared aggressively at Holloway and his 150" (Ryan 1969:295). Clearly this time the men of Hahalis were going to do their own fighting. Twosin had arranged his men alongside an ancestral cemetery, and the villagers believed that the graves would open up.

as the battle began, and their ancestors would leap out to help them, bearing rifles and shotguns. Burns and his nine Native Policemen carried rifles, but Burns was the only one with ammunition - he would dispense it only in a crisis. The only policemen carried only batons.

Holloway marched his men up to the group and called for Teosin to come forward. "We are all John Teosin," the villagers answered. "We have come to arrest you for riotous behavior," said Holloway. At that the villagers moved forward and surrounded the policemen, and the battle was on. Clubs, rocks and slingshots, spears and knives appeared, and blood flowed on both sides. Burns hurriedly issued his ammunition, fired two shots in the air, and the fighting stopped. Both sides backed off and tended to their wounded, which numbered 40 Hahalis men and 25 policemen (SP Post, Feb. 23, 1962).

Teosin had had enough. He appeared at the Hanahan Mission the following day with the delinquent tax money and relayed word to the police that he was ready to negotiate. On February 20 the by now alarmed Administration dispatched 500 additional native policemen to Buka, and Gunther was personally on the scene to see that the arrests be made. Gunther refused Teosin's first offer to negotiate. Finally Teosin agreed to come forward and surrender. On February 23

he and eight others walked into the police camp and gave themselves up. The heavy police reinforcements had quashed any notion of resistance by his followers, and the arrests of Hahalis villagers proceeded apace. By March 2 nearly 400 Buka men were arrested and confined on the island of Sohano in Buka Passage.

Congratulatory statements flowed out of Port Moresby to the officers and men of the police force. The South Pacific Post of Feb. 23, 1962 editorialized: "The Administration and police have acted with admirable firmness and yet almost cunning restraint to shock lawlessness out of these hooligans without turning it into a bloodbath." Australia's Minister for Territories Hasluck claimed that the Administration had brought "great credit" to Australia by its handling of the dangerous and touch incident (PIM March 1962:130).

Madang Magistrate R. Ormsby was dispatched to Sohano to deal with the prisoners. By March 5 convictions had been recorded against 588 Bukans: 306 for riotous behaviour, 272 for obstructing police, eight for tax evasion, and two (Teosin and Sawa) for escaping from custody. Of those convicted, 428 received jail terms ranging from one to six months, and 160 were fined from 10/- to £ 5. Forty-four of those arrested were found not guilty, and four charges were withdrawn by police (PIM March 1962).

"Queen Elizabeth's" cardboard crown was also seized and transported to Port Moresby as evidence, and a picture of it was prominently displayed on the front page of the South Pacific Post, March 16, 1962.

At a meeting of the Euka Native Local Government Council on March 9, 1962, the following resolution was unanimously passed: "The members of the Euka Council on behalf of all the people in the Council area are very happy about the way in which the Administration handled the people of Hahalis, Ielelina and Hanahan villages." "The people in the Council area know that the Hahalis people had broken the law, and are happy that no one was seriously injured in the trouble that arose between them and the police." (SP Post, Mar. 16, 1962). Hahalis nemesis Anton Kearei presided over the passage of the resolution.

What then occurred was totally unexpected. Four Australian trade unions had taken a special interest in the Hahalis case. Opposition M.P. Clyde Cameron (Labor S.A.) accused Minister for Territories Hasluck of hiding facts and questioned Hasluck as to why failure to pay personal tax was a criminal offense in Papua-New Guinea but not one in Australia. Said Cameron: "The Government was not compelled to act under the section of the ordinance which made failure to pay income tax

a criminal offense." "It could have recovered the tax under Section 17, which states that personal tax may be recovered as an ordinary debt." "Instead, the Government marched straight in, in the most provocative manner one could imagine, and sent police to arrest these people." "If we want to get the goodwill of the native people and to prevent the whole Territory being overrun by the Indonesians when they get control over West New Guinea - as no doubt they will - we have to stamp out these provocative actions of the Government against the native peoples." "The people who ought to be arrested are the nitwits who made the decision to proceed, on the basis of their being criminals, against people who had not paid income tax." (SP Post, Feb. 27, 1962).

Hasluck's attempt to refute Cameron's statements by pointing out the Hahalis refusal to join the Local Government Council was fruitless. A Melbourne barrister, Cedric Ralph, was sent by the unions to Port Moresby to represent the Society in appealing the convictions. To head off this outsider, the Administration sent its own representative, R.W. Cruikshank of the Public Solicitor's office, to investigate possible appeals. He reported accordingly and the first appeal went before Chief Justice Sir Alan Mann of the Supreme Court in April. On May 7 Chief Justice Mann ruled that Ormsby at Sohano

had been wrong in constituting a Court of Native Affairs, instead of sitting as a District Court. In a Native Court no European could act as a complainant, and this was overlooked in the excitement and confusion (Ryan 1969:301-2). The appeal was upheld, and in the next ten days nearly all of the Hahalis men were released from jail - they had beaten the government! Teosin and Hagai, who were being held in Bomana Prison in Port Moresby, were given a tour of the seat of government in a chauffeured government car, before returning to Buka.

If the Administration was embarrassed at the spectacle of February 6, it was mortified by the events of May. It was not important to Hahalis that the men were released on a technicality - by white men's terms, they were home free. The returning men were greeted as heroes, and Teosin and Hagai were in a position to exercise even more influence than ever on Buka.

A Papuan's View

Included among the massive reinforcement of 500 police sent to Buka on February 20 was a medical team. A member of the team was Albert Maori Kiki (now Sir Maori Kiki), who soon became a sympathetic observer of the Hahalis Welfare Society's objectives. Kiki accompanied Teosin and Hagai on their return to Buka as a "native affairs welfare assistant," and settled in with the villagers.

His interpretation of the movement's origins and objectives provides us with an interesting contrast to the European account.

Kiki, in his autobiography "Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime" credits Anton Kearei with founding the Hahalis Welfare Society. According to Kiki, Kearei's early conflict with the Catholic church, after being trained as a missionary, made him anti-mission and anti-white. In the late fifties he started a co-operative society that was to rival the co-operative set up by the Administration. The "forgotten people" in Buka wanted three things: a road for commerce, a government school, and a medical aid post. Since none of these things were forthcoming, Kearei was successful in persuading people to help themselves, and the Hahalis Welfare Society was formed.

The key to organizing communal farming was in getting control over the land, which was controlled by the village elders. Kearei and Teosin, who became involved in the Society upon his return from schooling, knew that they could never obtain the land unless they pretended to believe in Cargo, which the elders believed in.

The Society prospered, but Kearei saw the coming danger - the Administration was going to crack down sooner or later. So he secretly "sold out" to the

Administration, and told them that he wanted to form a local government council. When a council was formed and Kearei made chairman of it, the Hahalis Society immediately rejected him and elected Teosin as leader (Kiki 1968:109-112).

Kiki writes that the Society was run democratically, and all important decisions were made by a vote in the general assembly (formed of 62 spokesmen, two or three elected from each village). Cooperative stores and the purchase of lorries for transport were ventures decided on by the assembly. Regular village meetings were held on Friday nights to evaluate the successes and failures of the previous week.

After spending several months with Hahalis, Kiki was then transferred to Sohano. Kiki claims that the Administration transferred him from Hahalis because of his growing intimacy with the Society's ideals. According to Ryan, Teosin told him he "ordered Maori Kiki out of Hahalis - he was a government spy." (Ryan 1969:305). Whatever the reason for his departure, Kiki sounds sincere in his admiration of the Society's achievements.

The Administration and the missions pursued a psychological warfare campaign against Hahalis in the following years. In late 1962, after a visit to Bougainville, Acting Administrator Gunther said, "What we have to do, and do quickly, is to try to persuade the Hahalis people

to give up their obnoxious, immoral practices and re-enter the church that has done so much for them." (PIM, December 1962).

The road project down the center of Buka Island was undertaken and completed without incident, but no government school was built, and no medical station established. (Kiki 1968:110).

Hagai ran for Parliament in 1964 and 1968, but was beaten by Paul Lapun in 1964, and in 1968 by Donatus Mola who received considerable assistance from the Catholic missions. (Ryan 1969:313).

Hagai was invited to study in Australia in 1965-66 by the Cooperative for Aborigines, Ltd., an organization supported by the church, trade unions and public funds. On his return to Papua-New Guinea he was held by Customs officers when a case of Communist literature was found in his effects. He publicly declared himself a Communist, but the Australian Security Intelligence Organization's report indicated that the Hagai brand of Communism was a catch-cry, not an ideology, and matters were put to rest (Ryan 1969:305-6).

A report by PIM's Stuart Inder, following a visit he made to Buka in 1966, indicated that following a period of rapid growth for the Society, economic facts of life quickly caught up with it. The large trade store in

Hahalis had few trade goods for sale. Motor vehicles were inoperative due to lack of maintenance. Neither new homes nor high wages had come about, though promised by the Society's leaders. Economic stagnation had set in. This might have been attributed in part to the Administration's hands-off approach to Hahalis, but also the better organization of mission elements which had begun to compete with Hahalis in making converts (PIM April 1966).

To date the Administration is still at odds with Hahalis. Following an incident in December 1973 when American author George Weller was beaten up while interviewing Hahalis Society members, the Administration made a half-hearted attempt to try the case, then gave up (Far East Econ. Review, Mar. 28, 1975).

In 1974 Francis Hagai was killed in an automobile accident. John Teosin still heads the Society, but the movement lacks the fervency of its earlier days - perhaps the Administration's policy of attrition has finally worked, in the end.

Part III - Explaining Hahalis

As expected in a social phenomenon that has many diverse aspects to it, and a wide number of observers who look at the events from their own special viewpoints, the accounts of the Hahalis story have a number of built-in contradictions that must be accepted at face value in this analysis. For one, if we are to follow Kiki's explanation that Kearei and Teosin consciously played on the villagers' Cargoist tendencies in order to attract followers to their movement, then we have a situation where Cargoism plays a different role - still a factor for social change, but in a very important respect, a negative one, for by using the form and not the substance of Cargoism Kearei and Teosin rejected it as the ultimate solution to social revolution.

Secondly, in contrast to previous manifestations of Cargoism in Buka, the Hahalis movement was "rational" and constructive rather than destructive in economic terms. Work did not stop, but increased, and was better organized and more efficient. Food and monetary wealth was not consumed in rounds of feasting, but surpluses were kept and reinvested. Sensible requests were made for government aid - a road for easier marketing of copra and cocoa, a request for an agricultural officer to help increase technical knowledge, a government

school and medical aid station to improve their standard of living. There was nothing magical or religious in regard to these objectives.

We can gain a fuller understanding of the significance of the Hahalis movement by reviewing its thematic components:

a) Anti-white, anti-mission and anti-government attitudes - personified in Kearei, Teosin and Hagai, all mission trained - Kearei's switch to the government side was more an opportunistic move than a change in ideology.

b) A strong determination to achieve autonomy and self-government - refusal to join the Euka Local Government Council.

c) Copying the outward forms of white activities - regimentation, doing things on a set schedule, dressing like Europeans.

d) Breaking of taboos and increased sexual freedom - the Baby Garden, the young leading the elders.

e) Ancestor worship - the cult of the dead, belief in the return of the dead to help fight the battle using European weapons.

f) Chiliasm - breeding of a "master race", possibly a saviour to be born among the Baby Garden children.

g) Communalism - all men are equal, all children the children of the Society - experiential unification.

h) Deprivation - unsatisfied wants, payment of taxes with no return or reciprocity on the Administration's part.

i) Millenarianism - a product of indigenous beliefs and reinforced by the missions.

j) Revivalism - reintroduction of pre-missionary social and sexual customs.

Interestingly, absent from Hahalis but a part of nearly every Cargo movement was the hysteria and motor phenomena such as shaking, convulsions and mass-possession. The closest thing that can be associated to this in the Hahalis experience is the frenzied attack on the Burns group by women holding their babies in front of them.

The prophets

The return of John Teosin following the completion of his schooling to Hahalis signalled the start of the mass movement. He was youthful, intelligent, well-educated by village standards. He became "King John", a confident, well-organized charismatic leader.

One senses, however, that the real force behind the movement was Francis Hagai, Teosin's brother-in-law, a dynamic, virile, impulsive personality who was the Society's manager and manipulator under Teosin the godhead. The meshing of their individual talents was the key to giving the movement direction and purpose.

It is probably more coincidental than otherwise that Teosin and Hagai, the heirs to the Jorgoism of the past, married daughters of the woman cultist of Telcelina, although links with the past are an important feature of such movements. Perhaps the full story can be told with an interview of Teosin's wife Elizabeth and her sister, Hagai's widow, Rose.

Anton Kearei, the true founder of the Hahalis Welfare Society according to Kiki, is a study of contradictions. He was in turn a mission teacher, cult leader, government apologist, government interpreter, a chameleon of sorts. Here is a man with a high survival factor! He moved in and out of the drama and played a vital role in shaping not only village but Administration attitudes. Situations tended to polarize when Kearei was involved.

As the prime movers of Hahalis, these three men were responsible for turning existing beliefs into a viable political, social and economic movement that unified a group of disparate villagers, gave them direction and purpose, and brought about a new society.

Models for movements

Here we can turn to some of the theoretical models that have been put forth to explain how and why such movements have come about. Anthony Wallace has defined

a revitalization movement as a "deliberate, organized effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." (Am. Anthropologist, 1956:264-81).

Such a movement moves through five stages, from steady state to a period where a critical amount of stress breaks down existing institutions, to cultural distortion which results in changing behaviour patterns, which leads to the creation of a new gestalt (revitalization) followed by resolution into a new steady state, or equilibrium.

We can, generally, relate the Hahalis developments to this model by pointing to events that "fit" the stages - for example, the frustration which reached a peak following World War II when the Bukans realized that the return of the Australians did not herald a period of economic vigor but instead more of the same neglect and indifference they had endured prior to the war; the assumption of leadership by the young men of the village in place of the traditional village elders, and an overturning of sexual mores; and the revitalization which resulted from the shaking of the foundations.

What Wallace's theory fails in part to account for is the strong traditionalist element that formed an integral part of Hahalis activity - the return to ancestor worship, the rejection of the individualist capitalist

ethic for a communal system, and a return to sexual practices that had roots in pre-missionary Eukan society.

Ralph Linton has offered a definition of nativistic movements as "any conscious attempt on the part of a society's members to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture." (Am. Anthropologist, 1943:230-40). But Linton in his typology deprecates the rational aspects of a movement that seeks to revive or recreate customs that have fallen into disuse. This runs counter to the more modern analyses (cf. Jarvie, 1964) which argue that by definition all nativistic movements are rational, and in the Hahalis example, we cannot ignore the rationality of the revival of traditional aspects of its society by its leaders, aspects which played such a large part in welding the movement together.

Finally, we can also look back toward what the Administration was attempting to accomplish in Buka by the institution of a Local Government Council. This too was a break with traditional aspects of Eukan society, which had a history of fragmentation. Here the Administration was attempting to superimpose an overall authority with the presumption that the villages involved could be made to act in concert. Prior to this only cultist activities had brought the villages together. Could what the Administration offered - a Cargo of sorts - compete

with an indigenous movement with similar objectives?

The Hahalis experience reflects the instability of a people and area undergoing massive change in reaction to a multitude of factors, both internal and external; it also reflects the impossible task that the Administration, any administration, faces in trying to bring order into a situation where the readjustments have not yet fully run their course. What is most satisfying, however, is to reflect back on events that have transpired to see where a dominated people, forced to come to grips with a world changing too fast to understand, manage in their own way to regain some measure of pride and maintain their integrity, despite it all.

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